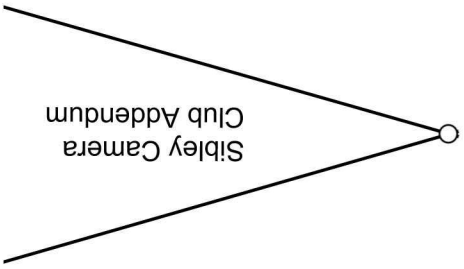
Sibley Camera Club Addendum

May 2021

Have you heard of Michael Forsberg ... I really enjoy the photography of Michael Forsberg, a Nebraska Nature Photographer who is known for capturing the Sandhill Crane Migration and scenes of the Great Plains. When I lived in Nebraska, our annual Spring adventure was to see the annual Crane migration along the Platte River. It is the most spectacular sight and sound I've ever witnessed. Michael chronicles this event, beautifully. I enjoyed Michaels book, "On Ancient Wings: The Story of the Sandhill Cranes." To see more of Michaels work, check out: www.michaelforsberg.com.



In this issue …

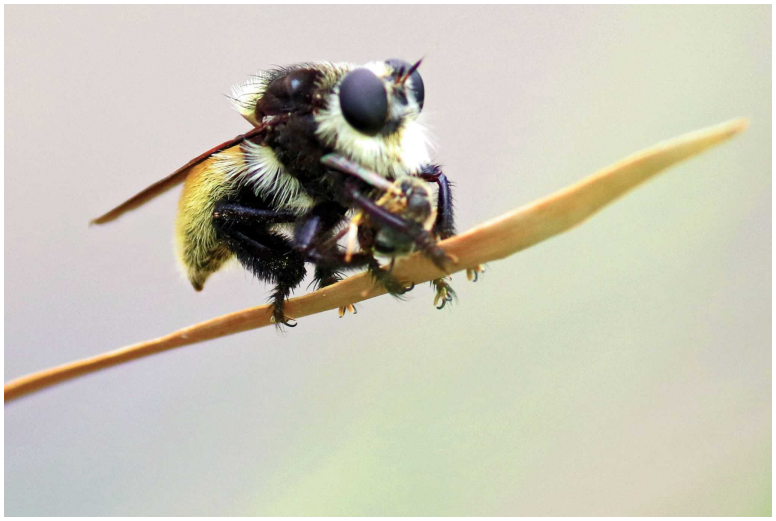
Notes from the editor

A special thanks to Carolyn Miller, Susan Benham, Kuohui Lian Suchecki, and Tonya Dawson for contributing to this issue. It was 1994 I last worked on a newsletter for the Permian Basin Computer User Group and many of the issues got printed on an actual printing press a member owned. I can't recall how I got the input other than calling members up to request material as well as write material myself to include. It was a different era and thanks to facebook and e-mail it is much easier now but it is the interacting with everyone that never changed between these two endeavors. I may come along and “call” on you for material so be ready but feel free to surprise me and send me content you would like to share as well.

Malcolm McElvaney
malcolmm9789@gmail.com

Beyond the photo

featured photographer Kuohui Lian Suchecki



The sharpness focus on this interesting insect is not where I wanted it to be at all, but there is a back story. This was my first attempt at insect photography, and excitedly with the Sibley Nature Center Camera Club during the Dragonfly Celebration. I had a Canon Rebel with the typical kit lenses. My eight-year old son, was looking through my pictures from the event and loved this photo in particular because to him it was a mother bee affectionately and preciously holding her baby bee. I later found out through my wonderful friends in the camera club, that this actually was a robber fly that looks similar to a bee but diet includes devouring bees. I did not have the heart to relay that newly learned information to my son. Ignorance is bliss. I still view this photo fondly as a picture seen through an eyes of an eight year old child and the reality, which was opposite in nature.

Astrophotography of the Milky Way

by Tonya Dawson

What an amazing experience it was to attend a Workshop on shooting the Milky Way. I had to get really psyched up for the difficult task ahead of me.

Proper equipment is a must:

- A camera that shoots in RAW
- Wide angle lens – turn off Image Stabilizer if your lens has one
- Sturdy tripod
- Remote shutter release

There are so many factors involved. For instance:

- Location:
  - Light pollution is a huge consideration. i.e. Light Pollution Map App.
  - Find something to "anchor the foreground to add interest", i.e. ruins, hills, etc.
  - You can use light painting on the foreground too add more interest to your image
- Weather:
  - Weather conditions, i.e. Clear Sky Chart App.
    - Provides forecast for 24-48 hours for cloud cover, humidity, temp and other conditions

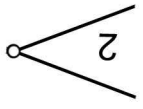
I think the most challenging for me was **FOCUSING**. There were some tips that were very helpful:

- Set Focus to Infinity
- Lens and camera on Manual Focus
- Focus on a bright star
- Use LCD screen to view because you want to zoom in on your focusing star to make sure it's sharp

SHUTTER SPEED: There seemed to be a thin line between getting the correct exposure and alleviating star trailing. The calculation formula to determine your exposure time is called the "500 rule":

500/(focal length X crop factor of your camera) = maximum exposure time

For example, I had a 10-20 mm lens, f3.5. On a full frame camera, it's 1x crop factor. On a crop sensor camera it's about 1.5x (Nikon), maybe 1.6x (Canon). I calculated mine



at about:

$$500/(16 \text{ X } 1.5) = 20.83 \text{ seconds}$$

As far as **APERTURE** goes:

- Widest f stop that your lens will go
- But this will make a small depth of field and lacking in sharpness on the foreground. It was suggested, you could take a second exposure and refocus on the foreground into focus and then stack them. If you do this, you light something up in the foreground with a flashlight and focus on that.

ISO:

- Maximum you can go without too much noise (grainy)
- Take some shots at different ISO to determine what's best for your camera.

COMPOSITION:

- Rule of Thirds
- Play around with lighting in the foreground
- Making your photo stand out. I like to look on social media at other photographer's astro shots to get ideas.

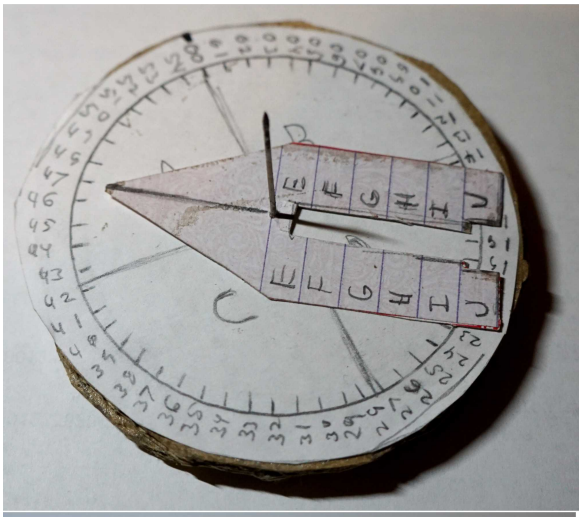
EDITING:

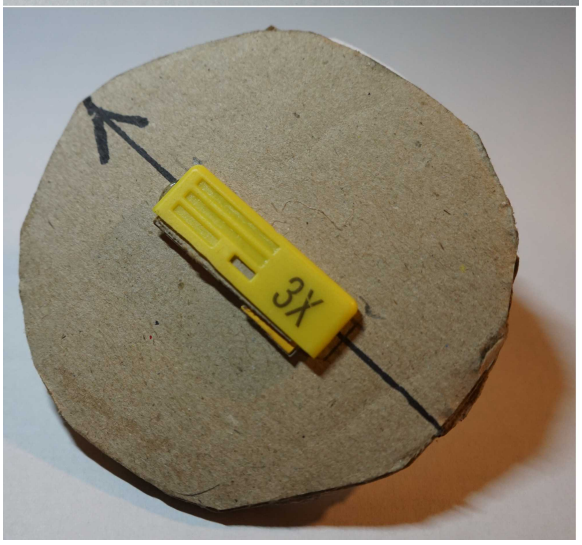
- Lightroom and Photoshop
- Move into a DeNoiser software:
    - Topaz
    - MacPhune (Kelly suggested)
- Quick and Dirty Editing

As in any kind of photography, there's no one size fits all. This is where you and your style come in.

DIY gear – light dial

by Malcolm McElvaney



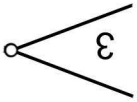


I took these pictures on 03/09/2021 so the device is built and untested but what was the niche this fills? It fits in the hot shoe of my camera flat enough that I can get a consistent reading and zero will be in the direction of the lens. Hand numbered and prototyped with junk yet an useful purpose does exist.

When you take a picture EXIF data is stored in the file to record the focal length, f/stop, iso, metering program, and much more but there are visual elements that can't be quantified yet we as the viewer know even if unaware of it. Taken for granted and unappreciated how we see visually when only one photograph is involved isn't so critical; however, combine more than one photograph and these anomalies will be important. Recording manually the direction of the light sources and how many is one way to better match unlike reference photos.

Cutting out elements of one photo and properly blending it in to another requires a practiced eye to pull off “flawlessly” so all the help you can get will make it easier in the final process. Those who paint usually have this skill set out of necessity due to the medium of choice but as photographers it may not be so practiced or my in my case exist at all. Consider sky replacement as an example, if the direction of the sun at least matched then it will be believed more readily.

Ultimately I built this tool to help build an image with the end goal of accomplishing what my imagination is capable of seeing. This modified sun dial may or may not prove useful but perhaps you may also see a use for the concept.



More about us . . .

The Sibley Nature Center Camera Club meets on the first Saturday of the month from 10am to 11:30am at the Sibley Nature Center on 1307 E. Wadley in Midland. Come join in on the monthly photo challenges on the groups FaceBook page and be part of the activity as well. In addition to the monthly meeting we are currently doing weekly zoom meetings. We have had some fantastic guest speakers from around this area and the United States. They have been kind enough to share and talk about their journey in photography.

As always we welcome anyone that is interested in photography to join us. Our membership requirements are the $40.00 annual membership donation to Sibley Nature Center and attend at least one meeting a year. Any questions please contact Kelly at sibleycameraclub@gmail.com.